



Mimulus **MEMO**

**California Native Plant Society
Kern County Chapter**
Spring II 2006

CNPS President's Message

I hope all of you are enjoying our beautiful spring! Our trip to the Kaweah Oaks Preserve was lovely. I had not been there in , oh,... about 25 years, and I'd forgotten the impression those huge Valley Oaks and Sycamores make! The vines, Elderberries, Bush Lupines were also impressive. The hydrology and geology are unique here, and produce a shady haven for a great spring visit and picnic.

We then drove west and south to see the Pixley Vernal Pools. While the pools had not evaporated yet, leaving the signature concentric rings of various species of flowering plants, we did see many specimens of the beautiful, and unique plants. Many thanks to Aaron Wentzel, a member from Merced, and student at CSU Stanislaus, for teaching us about the special flora present. I encourage everyone to Google Pixley Vernal Pools and make your way there in the next few weeks to check out the pools! And, next time join us for the comradery and excitement of discovering each special plant! As Pat Stone, of the Sierra Foothills Chapter said of their field trips, "This is CNPS at its best. Two or three people with Jepsons and other flora, keying something. At least three separate conversations going on at once, about speciation, odd plant characteristics, exotics, geology or a dozen other interesting, relevant topics. Two or three cameras clicking and whirring. This is the basis for all real plant knowledge and it is thrilling to be along" on the trip.

In other good news we have been asked to be a featured guest at CALM on one Saturday night this summer! We are looking for a person with a good design sense to help us revive our display board, so we can better inform the public about our group and its mission and activities. Please offer to help this design-challenged person, by contacting me at lucyg391@gmail.com.

Hope to see you on one of our future trips into the field to learn about our special plants, (and ordinary ones) so we can be better advocates for our California flora.

Lucy Clark

Some time back, CNPS adopted the chaparral plant community at CALM. By adopting a garden area at CALM, an individual or organization volunteers to come out and weed, clean-up, and in general check on and take care of that specific area. Another "some time" has passed since CNPS has come out to take care of this area. CALM will be celebrating its 23rd birthday on May 20th. We do not want "our" garden area to be the worst looking, so we are going out in force to weed and make amends with the chaparral plants in the community. Sunday, May 7th, from 9am - 3pm. Pick any 2 hours that you are able to come and come on out. Please bring your own gardening tools; make sure you are dressed for the weather. Bring water and a lunch, if you desire.

CALM's gardens are an example to those desiring to landscape with native plants and as specimens for our fall sale plants. So, come on out; the more the merrier (and the faster the job gets done!).

Thanks,

Debby Kroeger

BEGINNER'S WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

Marya Miller

On March 11 two Kern River Valley friends and I motored down the canyon to Bakersfield to participate in Ellen Cypher's "Beginning Wildflower Identification Workshop". When we arrived we were led into a cozy little work room in the office of Marcia Hamann-Wolfe where we sat at a spacious work table with Ellen and 6 other participants. We didn't realize it at the time but 2 of those present were there as helpers who became valuable to us later on when the keying began.

Ellen started by talking about the basics, helping us to understand the purpose of a key and its workings. We became familiar with some basic plant terminology and talked about some of the different keys that are available. Ellen brought a number of live specimens so that after she led us in some group keying we were each given a specimen to try to key on our own. This is when we found out why the 'helpers' were there, they were very - well – helpful.

I think that we all came away from the workshop with a concept of how a key works, and understanding of how variable all of those little parts of flowers can be. And a belief that with patience and practice the process will become less frustrating. We also came away with charts of general flower parts and leaf arrangements and a list of common California plant families. It was quite a long and interesting day and we were all very glad that we had made the journey. Thank you, Ellen.

SAND RIDGE PRESERVE MUSTARD BASHING

Forty five huge bags of Sahara Mustard (Brassica tournefortii) were removed from our well-loved preserve on Sunday, April 23. Many thanks to Debby Kroeger for referring Jacob Parks to us. He is an Eagle Scout working for a William T. Hornaday Award. This project met the requirements, and Jacob, his family, and friends carried out the removal. Ellen Cypher served as liaison to the Preserve Manager, and we thank her for her time. Many thanks to Lucy Clark, and Lorraine and Arthur Unger, who represented Kern Chapter of CNPS on Sunday in the drizzle. It was worth it! The Bakersfield Cactus (Opuntia basilaris var. Treleasei) was blooming, as was Wishbone bush (Mirabilis californica), Thistle Sage (*Salvia carduacea*), Chia (*Salvia columbariae*), and California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*). The Ungers will survey next January, and Jacob's Mom, Kathy, will encourage another Scout to remove the new crop of aliens. We believe this will be a great boon to the Sand Ridge, a haven for desert plants in the San Joaquin Valley.

This project was so successful that we should consider forming a "Weed Whacker" group, as many CNPS chapters have done. If you have an interest in removing alien plants, which take resources from our natives, and provide little in useful habitat to our native animals, let us know, and we will try to form a group willing to take out their hostilities on weeds. Very therapeutic!

The Valley Oak

Adapted from "At Risk: Kern County Habitats and Species"
by Linda Cooley

The Valley Oak (*Quercus lobata*) is a huge tree that grows all around and in the central valley. Like the Blue Oak (*Quercus douglasii*), it is a California endemic. It can grow to almost 200' feet tall and is thought to be the biggest American oak. It may survive for over 500 years. The branches are often twisted and sometimes the outer branches droop and touch the ground. Its bark is thick and marked by cracks into square shapes. It has leaves that are up to 10 cm long and have three to five pairs of lobes on them. The leaves are soft and fuzzy underneath. The Valley Oak is deciduous; it drops its leaves in the fall. Oaks have two kinds of flowers: the female flowers located near the leaves and the male flowers hanging down in clusters. The wind spreads the pollen from male to female flowers. If the female flowers are fertilized, acorns are produced in the fall. Jays and woodpeckers harvest the acorns and help disperse the seeds.

Valley Oak prefers to grow in the central valley. It likes deep soil, which allows its roots to reach ground water. It can tolerate the alkaline soil found in many parts of Kern county. In the past, the Valley Oak was widely distributed throughout the valleys of California and into the foothills. Before farming, ranching and ground water pumping, much of the central valley looked like a large park with grassy plains dotted with large, majestic oaks. Those giant oaks are gone now with only a few remnant sites like Kaweah Oaks to remind us. Fortunately Valley Oak does reasonably well in the foothills and still survives there in large numbers, if not the full majesty of its preferred valley locations.

IN THE FIELD

Despite the lack of winter rain this year, the annual Ridgcrest wildflower show at the Maturango museum (April 7-9) had almost 200 species on display. Much of the flat desert was pretty bare, but the washes and canyons were generally good. The late rains helped, but we got snowed on while enjoying the flowers (especially large *Phacelia nashiana*!) in 9-mile canyon. After seeing the wildflower show, Steven Hampson led our CNPS group to Poison Canyon near Trona. That area is interesting in that it has a number of plants that are more typical of Death Valley and are seldom seen elsewhere in the Ridgcrest area. For example, we saw gravel ghost (*Atrichoseris platyphylla*), desert gold (*Geraea canescens*), death valley goldeneye (*Viguiera reticulata*), death valley mohavea (*Mohavea breviflora*) and desert fivespot (*Eremalche rotundifolia*). All together we saw about 40 blooming species and the weather was perfect.



Notholaena californica?

A few days later, some of us took a drive up Kern Canyon to see Kern Canyon larkspur (*Delphinium purpusii*). We had heard reports of it blooming along 178 near the Richbar campground and we were not disappointed. Like the striped adobe lily (*Fritilaria striata*) that we were looking for last month, this species of larkspur has only been observed in Kern and Tulare counties. According to Twisselmann, this is the only rose-pink larkspur in North America, (although our local *D. gracilentum* can also be pink according to Jepson.) The plants were on the cliff face within a couple feet of the road, so each time a car whizzed by we all had to flatten, limpet-like, on the rocks.

Last year we had a field trip to Mill Creek in Kern Canyon, and there was a fern that nobody recognized. We stopped by again this year to see the *Orobanche uniflora* that grows at the start of the trail and get a leaf of the fern to ID. It seems to be *Notholaena californica*, which has never been reported in Kern County. It is *very chalky* and gets your fingers white just touching it. So, there you have it.... by going on CNPS fields trips you can discover new plants and become rich and famous! (if you also win the lottery)

We also had a visit from Tom Chester and Wayne Armstrong who came all the way from San Diego. As you might recall from a previous *Mimulus* Memo note, they are studying *Brodiaea terrestris* ssp. *kernensis*. The type specimen was collected in the Poso Creek oilfields, but none were to be found this year. We did stumble on one rattlesnake in the deep grass though, so our enthusiasm for exploring in that area waned somewhat. There were sightings with GPS data from around Woody last year, but it was still too early at that elevation. Plenty of other interesting flowers including *Mimulus pictus*, but they didn't find what they came for. So, once again, if you see any *Brodiaea* (not *Dichelostemma* or *Triteleia*) blooming, please drop a note to Wayne at mrwolffia@cox.net.



Fritilaria Brandegei

And finally, on the last day of April, some of us took a quick trip to Cedar Creek on 155 above Glenville to see if we could find the rare and unusual Greenhorn fritillary, *Fritilaria Brandegei*. To quote Twisselmann "Scarce in colonies in heavy soil on north slopes in the ponderosa pine forest and rare in the shin oak brush in the Greenhorn Range. (the plant is endemic to this region and extreme southern Tulare County). These colonies are usually browsed by deer and the flower stalks are completely eaten, so that the plant is rarely found in bloom."

However, we beat the deer (and cows) this year, and found several in flower and quite a few more in bud. Clyde Golden took this picture last year at the same location, and it, with a couple others he took then, are the only pictures of *F. Brandegei* at CalPhoto. So, if you are into digital photography, there is still plenty of opportunity to improve the on-line representation of Kern plants.

MORE FIELD TRIPS

We hope you will save a few days to seek out known and unknown native plants during the hot days of summer. We will plan on going up the mountains to find both blooms, and cooler temps. Mark your calendars now, and join us!

*Always bring water, snacks, a lunch, a hat, sunscreen, and layers of clothing for variable weather. Although our insurance does not allow us to assign rides, we encourage car pooling. **We ask that you let us know if you plan to attend, so we know how many will be coming.***

May 6th, Saturday Wishon Road with Linda Cooley

Wishon Road has many interesting and beautiful species along its gradual rise. Bring your cameras and wildflower books, and explore with us this Tulare County "garden."

Meet at 8 A.M. at the Denny's parking lot at Hwy 65 and 7th Standard Rd. to car pool to beyond Springville to Wishon Rd. off Hwy 190. This will be a drive, walk, look-around trip at around 3300'.

To attend, contact: Steve Hampson at shampson@gmail.com.

May 13th, Saturday Breckenridge Road with Steve Hampson

We will motor up to the oaks and stop for looks-around by the roadside. We will top out at 6600' in the yellow pine forest for lunch. For those who need to return to town early, you can return the way we came. We will continue on to Bodfish and down the Kern Canyon, or perhaps loop back through Caliente. Since it is too early for flowers at the higher elevations, we will spend most of our time down in the oak woodland.

Meet at the Taco Bell parking lot at the southeast corner of Hwys 58 and 184 (Weedpatch Hwy) at 8:30 A.M. sharp.

To attend, contact: Steve Hampson at shampson@gmail.com.

June 4th, Sunday McNalley Burn Area with Janet Westbrook

This is the field trip offered to CNPS Chapter Delegates attending the quarterly meeting which will be held in Ridgecrest on June 2, 3, and 4. Kern members are invited also, as we are hosts. Reports are that native plants are springing back to life vigorously! This is an opportunity to see how nature responds to fire. We will be making LOTS of stops at several burn sites. Janet is the burn expert from the Bristlecone Chapter-Creosote Ring Group!

Meet at the Taco Bell parking lot at the SE corner of Hwys 58 and 184 (Weedpatch Hwy) at 6:30 A.M. sharp.

For folks in the eastside area, go north on Hwy 14/395 to the Kern/Inyo line (which is the Shell Station), and keep going north past Pearsonville about 3 miles, to the Kennedy Meadows signs. Meet in the big open space there, at the bottom of 9 Mile Canyon Road about 9 A.M.. We will carpool from there also. It is doubtful that westsiders will be able to return home over Sherman Pass because of lots of snow!

Please let Steve know if you plan to attend at shampson@gmail.com

June 24th, Saturday Jordan Peak with the Alta Peak Chapter

We have been invited to join with our Tulare County friends on their annual trek to view the rare and exquisite lily *Erythronium pusaterii*. This is an easy, but mostly uphill 2+ mile climb to the peak at 9100' elevation. Fortunately, there are many sub-alpine species to investigate on the way to the Lookout at the top, when we can catch our breath! We will meet the Alta Peakers at 10 A.M. where North Road meet Hwy 190 near Quaking Aspen Meadow.

Meet at the Denny's at 7th Standard Road and Hwy 65 at 7:45 A.M. to carpool up 65 to Hwy 190 to Springville. From Giffords in Springville, it is 24 miles up to North Road.

Please let Lucy know if you plan to attend! lucyg391@gmail

July 8th, Saturday Bald Mountain Botanical Area with Alison Sheehey

We will drive, stop, wander about at an elevation of about 9,400 feet, to look for the special plants for which this area has been reserved; and various conifers; and interesting geology; and for signs of plant succession after fire. For great information on the Bald Mountain Botanical Area, go to www.natureali.org/SQF/bald_mountain.html. Who knew this was in our backyard?!

(Alison posts a wonderful web site, www.natureali.org which is recommended for info on the natural history of Central California.)

Alison anticipates camping there over night, and leaves that as an option for anyone else inclined to join her on Sunday for a trip along the West side on Cherry Hill Road, down to Big Meadow. She reports that it gets down to freezing up there in July, so bring very warm clothing and camping gear! And mosquito repellent! Plan to be self-sufficient in food and water.

For West siders, meet in the Tuesday Morning parking lot, corner of Fairfax and Auburn to form carpools. We can do this by campers and non-campers. We will leave at 8 am to arrive in Kernville by 9:30. We will join with East siders and our leader, Alison, at the Gateway Market (James Store) in Kernville at 9:30am. Plan to top off gas tanks in Kernville, as there is no gas farther along the trip!

Please let Steve Hampson know if you plan to attend, at shampson@gmail.com.

Other possibilities

If you are interested in a dog days of summer August camping and flowering event somewhere on cool, cool Sherman Pass, e-mail either Lucy or Steve for details yet to be decided. Details such as the date.....



CNPS Elections Are Coming This Summer!

One of the most important things that CNPS members can do is to volunteer for service on the State Board of CNPS. The State Board of CNPS works to ensure that the policies of the Chapter Council become reality and that the work of the Chapters is strongly supported. **Everyone who loves CNPS should consider running!**

The positions that need to be filled are Board Vice-President, Board Treasurer, three Directors (probably), two Chapter Council Representatives on the Board, and Chapter Council Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Please see below for job descriptions.

At least one, if not more, of the Director positions are open immediately, subject to Chapter Council approval.

These positions are open to any CNPS members. To become a candidate, it is necessary to complete a nomination petition. Chapter Council candidates need to have their petition endorsed by a chapter. A blank form is attached. Please send the completed and signed petition to the CNPS state office by June 23, 2006. Any legible format is adequate. Please mail the completed petition to 2707 K Street, Suite 1, Sacramento, CA 95816 or fax it to 916-447-2727. Please clearly indicate on the envelope, or fax cover sheet that the item relates to CNPS board elections. Because the petitions need to be signed, please do not send them by e-mail.

Candidates may also wish to address the CNPS Chapter Council, which meets on June 3 at Ridgecrest. Candidate petitions and statements need to be to the state office by June 23 for inclusion on the ballot. Candidate petitions will be included with ballots to be sent out by July 1. Completed ballots need to be returned to the state office by August 30.

Current CNPS Board

Below is the CNPS state board for 2006 and their terms.

President- Brad Jenkins (2006 -2007);

Vice-President – Sandy McCoy (2005-2006);

Secretary - Lynn Houser(2006 -2007);

Treasurer – Steve Hartman (2005-2006);

Directors (2006 - 2007) – Sue Britting, Diana Hickson, David Magney, Spence McIntyre.

Directors (2005-2006) - David Diaz (resigned; seat vacant)

Chapter Council Representatives - Dave Flietner, Charli Danielsen (2006)

Chapter Council Chair – Jim Bishop (2006)

Chapter Council Vice-Chair – Charli Danielsen

Chapter Council Secretary - Sarah Jayne (2006)

What Skills and Attributes are Needed on the Board?

Each year, the Board identifies the characteristics as particularly needed on the Board. For 2005, the Board chose:

Fundraising, Public Relations, Business Contacts, Ethnic Contacts, Persons under 40 in Age, Foundation Contacts, Marketing, Sales, Financial Management

Honor All Candidates: The CNPS bylaws encourage competitive elections. CNPS members may avoid becoming candidates for fear of losing. Please don't be! The act of running is a highly honorable one. All CNPS members need to join the Leadership Development Committee in saluting all candidates.

More Information and Assistance: Please call any member of the Leadership Development Committee if you have any questions. Sandy McCoy, the Chair, may be reached at sandymccoy@mindspring.com or at 510-981-1991. Thank you very much!

CNPS Board Member- Job Description

A member of the CNPS Board is expected to take fiduciary responsibility for the management, programs, and financial health of CNPS, as well as to help to determine, with the assistance of the Chapter Council, the strategic future of CNPS. A CNPS Board member needs to be familiar with the CNPS bylaws and organizational structure and to abide by it. Board members are also asked to represent CNPS's work and its value to the community.

Board members are asked to travel to and attend seven meetings a year. Reimbursement is available for travel and lodging expenses. Three of these meetings are held at the CNPS State Office in Sacramento. The other four meetings are held at other locations around California. Additional meetings may occur by teleconference. Board members are asked to familiarize themselves with financial and program reports and to thoroughly prepare themselves prior to meetings.

Board members are asked to actively participate in at least one committee. The established committees are the Executive, Finance, Leadership Development, Strategic Planning, and Membership and Fundraising Committees.

All members of the Board are expected to participate in fundraising by making a meaningful personal gift or by supporting the CNPS fund raising effort.

Board members who represent the Chapter Council have reduced expectations regarding committee work because of their need to communicate and engage with the Chapter Council and its leadership.

Board members are also asked to disclose any potential monetary and professional conflicts of interest they may have to the Board.

Job of the Vice President: The vice-president is the secondary officer of CNPS and supports the Board President. The Vice-President leads the Leadership Development Committee, which supervises elections.

Job of the Treasurer: The Treasurer has overall responsibility for CNPS funds. The Treasurer keeps, or supervises the keeping of, accurate accounts, deposits money, disburses funds, and develops reports on the financial condition of CNPS.

Job of the Director: The job of a Director on the Board is summarized in the job description for Board member above.

Job of the Chair of the Chapter Council: The chair of the Chapter Council organizes and presides over meetings of the Chapter. The Chair of the Chapter Council communicates with the Board.

Job of the Vice Chair of the Chapter Council: The vice chair of the Chapter Council assists the Chair of the Chapter Council and presides in the absence of the Chair of the Chapter Council.

Job of the Secretary of the Chapter Council: The Secretary of the Chapter Council is responsible for all record keeping for the Chapter Council.

Job of the Chapter Council Representatives on the Board: The Representatives of the Chapter Council on the Board serve as directors on the Board with the same rights and duties of other directors. In addition, the Chapter Council Representatives are asked to aid communication between the Board and the Chapter Council.

California Native Plant Society

Candidate Petition for Officer or Director – State Board and Chapter Council

Return to State Office by June 23, 2006 by Fax or Mail

1. **Name:** _____ **Address:** _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

When You Prefer Telephone Calls:

2. **Candidate For (check one only):** ☐ President ☐ Vice-President ☐ Secretary ☐ Treasurer ☐ Director ☐ Chapter Council Representative ☐ Chapter Council Chair ☐ Chapter Council Vice-Chair ☐ Chapter Council Secretary
3. **Chapter Affiliation:** _____ **How Long A Member?** _____
4. **Please list positions you have held in CNPS chapters or state organization:**

5. **What specialized skills would you bring to the job?**
6. **What other experience do you have in governance, finance, administration, or fundraising?**
7. **How would you help the Board or Council do its job as described in the CNPS Bylaws (sec. B-4, C-2) and in the Governance Document (p.1, 2, and 4)?**
8. **How would you work to implement the Society's programs and expand its service?**

I hereby submit this nomination petition and certify that I am a CNPS member in good standing:

Signed: _____ Printed Name _____

Candidates for Chapter Council Officers: This nomination petition submitted authorized by the _____ Chapter of CNPS.

Signed: _____ Printed Name: _____

Position in Chapter: _____

Our Kern County CNPS website is at <http://www.cnps.org/chapters/kern/>

If you know of some sites we should include links to, please let us know. Or, if you have some pictures or information on your own home page that you would like to share, that would be great! We would like to start a "local links" section on our web page where Kern CNPS members can share their thoughts, pictures, trips, gardening experiences, or whatever with other members.

This newsletter, and some past newsletters can be found in there in PDF format.

CNPS – Kern County Chapter
PO Box 9622
Bakersfield, CA 93389-9622

The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through science, education, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.